



CALGARY

Weekly Newscasts Lesson Plan

December 14, 2015

Newscasts are current news stories read at a slower pace than you might hear on the radio. These are prepared by CBC news editor Natasha Frakes.

Objectives:

- To develop listening skills
- To increase vocabulary
- To increase awareness of grammatical structures and functional language
- To increase knowledge of current events
- To provide a user-friendly, self-study tool for learners, as well as an ESL classroom resource for instructors

Contents:

Three news stories are featured in each weekly lesson plan. Each lesson contains vocabulary and listening comprehension activities. At the end of each lesson, you will find a complete transcript and an answer key. This lesson plan is aimed towards learners at an intermediate language level (i.e. Canadian Language Benchmarks 4-5 or equivalent).



Learning English with CBC is a joint project with CBC Calgary, CBC Edmonton, and the Government of Alberta.
Lesson Plan prepared by Kathleen Hall, Communication4Integration Inc.

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NEWSCAST 1: DOLLARAMA RETAIL CHAIN SAYS MAJORITY OF ITEMS NOW SOLD FOR \$1.25 AND UP



Photo Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/dollarama-earnings-loonie-1.3356937>

WARM UP

Do you shop at discount stores? Does it affect your budget/financial plan when prices go up by a few cents?

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 1 for overall comprehension, and respond to the following question when you have finished listening. Circle the best response.

How much of the newscast did you understand?

None Some Most All

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Before you listen to Newscast 1 again, study the words in the box below. While you listen to Newscast 1 again, put a checkmark (✓) next to the words when you hear them.

WORDS	✓	WORDS	✓
and up		profit	
virtually		chain	
value		razor-thin	
rakes in		margins	
expenses			

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Study the vocabulary from the newscast and their meanings in the table below.

WORDS	MEANINGS
and up	not less than, but might be more than
virtually	almost, nearly
value	what something is worth in money
rakes in	to get (money) in large amounts
expenses	the cost required for something; the money spent on something
profit	difference between the amount earned and the amount spent
chain	stores owned by one company and selling the same merchandise
razor-thin	a very small difference between two amounts
margins	the amount one thing is different from another

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3

Instructions: Now that you have studied the words that you heard in Listening Activity 2, listen to Newscast 1 again, and respond to the following question: Circle the best response.

How much of the newscast did you understand?

None Some Most All

LISTENING ACTIVITY 4

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 1 again. Listen for the following numbers. Put a checkmark (✓) next to the numbers when you hear them.

NUMBER	✓		✓
60		25	
4		13	
1.25		100,000,000	
1			

LISTENING ACTIVITY 5

Instructions: Listen for the numbers in Newscast 1 again. What does each number represent?

NUMBER	REPRESENTS
60	
4	
1.25	
1	
25	
13	
100,000,000	

(See answer key)

NEWSCAST 2: SUICIDE RATE IN ALBERTA UP 30% IN WAKE OF MASS OILPATCH LAYOFFS



Photo Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/suicide-rate-alberta-increase-layoffs-1.3353662>

WARM UP

Have you noticed any effect from the loss of oilpatch jobs in your community?

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 1

In Newscast 2 you will hear the idiom to be at one's **wits' end**.

Instructions: Read the following sentences, both of which use the idiom **wits' end** correctly:

1. He was so upset that he did not know what to do. He was at his **wits' end**.
2. She could not think of any more ideas. She was at her **wits' end**.

What do you think it means to be at one's wits' end? Write your definition in the space provided:

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Look at the following words that you will hear in Newscast 2, and write definitions for the words you understand in your own words:

WORD	DEFINITION
rate	
mount	
distress	
counsellor	
struggling	
complex	
staggering	
exceeds	
expected	
optimistic	
trend	
curbed	
specifically	
earmarked	
link	

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 3

Instructions: Study the same words and their synonyms in the table below. Circle the synonyms that you understand.

WORD	SYNONYM
rate	amount/percentage
mount	increase/grow
distress	trouble/difficulty/stress/worry
counsellor	advisor/guide
struggling	under pressure/fighting
complex	complicated/difficult
staggering	shocking/surprising/amazing
exceeds	beats/outdoes/goes beyond
expected	usual/awaited/normal
optimistic	hopeful/positive
trend	development/movement/current
curbed	limited/controlled/reduced
specifically	exactly/definitely
earmarked	set aside/kept/saved
link	connect/join/tie

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 4

Instructions: Without looking at the table above again, try to write the words that you remember with the matching definitions below:

WORD	DEFINITION
	a measure, quantity, or frequency
	a relationship where one thing affects the other
	to have a special or definite purpose
	astonishing or deeply shocking
	change or develop in a way
	something that one thinks will be or happen
	difficult to find an answer to
	a person trained to give guidance on personal, or psychological problems
	a lot of anxiety, sorrow, or pain
	to control or limit something that is not wanted
	have difficulty handling or coping
	be greater in number or size than
	choose for a purpose
	hopeful and confident about the future
	to increase, rise, or get bigger

(See answer key)

Now look at the table from Vocabulary Activity 3, and fill in the words you could not remember next to their definitions.

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 5

Instructions: Go back to Vocabulary Activity 2, and add or change definitions for words you might have missed or misunderstood. Remember to write the definitions in your own words.

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 2 for overall comprehension. Use the following questions to help you:

1. What has increased in Alberta? _____
2. How much has the suicide rate increased? _____
3. How much has demand for counselling services increased? _____
4. Did Mara Grunau expect the increase in Alberta's suicide rate? _____
5. What is Mara Grunau hoping? _____
6. Does the Canadian Mental Health Association say there is enough information to link the suicide rate to the economy? _____

(See answer key)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 2 again, and fill in the blanks with the words that you hear.

The suicide _____ in Alberta has increased by 30 percent in the first half of this year as job losses _____ across the province.

Calgary Distress Centre _____ David Kirby says demand for counselling services has increase by 80 per cent—and the problems people are _____ with are more _____. He said, “People are just at wits’ _____”.

Mara Grunau, who heads the Centre for Suicide Prevention, says the increase in Alberta’s suicide _____ is _____ adding, “It...far _____ anything we would have ever _____, and we would never have _____ to see this much this soon.”

However, Grunau is _____ the _____ can be _____ now that the province has increased its budget for mental health. “In the budget we saw money specifically _____ for mental health and we’re hoping that some of it will be directly put into suicide prevention,” Grunau said.

The Canadian Mental Health Association says it is too early to _____ the suicides with the economy.

(See answer key)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Do you think that mental health is as important as physical health? Do you have some advice for staying positive? Share your advice with a friend or classmate, and ask for recommendations from them.

NEWSCAST 3: NORWEGIAN NEWSPAPER ACCIDENTALLY PUBLISHES A NOTICE THAT STATED SANTA CLAUS WAS DEAD



Photo Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/trending/santa-dead-norway-hoax-notice-1.3354233>

WARM UP

Who is the character in the picture? What do you know about him?

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Look at the following words that you will hear in Newscast 3, and circle the synonyms that you understand:

prominent	well-known/famous
accidentally	by mistake/unintentionally
publishing	printing/announcing
notice	announcement/statement
listed	recorded/noted
jolly	cheerful/happy/merry
chapel	small church/ sanctuary
hoax	trick/joke/prank
botched	failed/poor/inferior
internal	inside/in-house
procedure	way/method/technique
fake	false/pretend
version	story/report
vows	promises/guarantees

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Look at the words from the table above. Put the number in the box below next to the words with the opposite meaning. You will have to use two numbers in the same box once.

1. prominent	2. accidentally	3. publishing	4. notice	5. jolly
6. hoax	7. botched	8. internal	9. fake	10. vows

NUMBER	ANTONYM/OPPOSITE
	real/genuine
	break a promise/refuse
	external/outside
	keep secret/cover up
	corrected/succeeded
	secret/concealment
	sad/miserable/gloomy
	obscure/little-known/minor
	on purpose

(See answer key)

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 3

Instructions: Study the idioms and their same meanings and antonyms/opposites in the table below:

IDIOM	SYNONYMS/MEANINGS	ANTONYMS/OPPOSITES
shy of	almost/nearly	far away/distant
take place	happen/occur	stopped/postponed
slip-up	mistake/error	success/achievement
sigh of relief	to suddenly feel very happy because something unpleasant has ended	to feel anxious because something unpleasant is happening
well-timed	timely/suitable	untimely/inconvenient
weighed in	added/contributed/had a say	

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 4

Instructions: Complete the following sentences with the best idiom from the table above:

- When he _____ with his advice, rather than being inconvenient, it was _____.
- Their project was not a success due to a _____.
- The event has not been postponed. It will _____ as scheduled.
- When they realized there was a solution, they breathed a _____.
- The car did not break down far away from their destination. They were just _____ their journey's end.

(See answer key)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 3 for overall comprehension.

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to the Newscast again for the following numbers and underline how they are said:

26	twenty six twenty sixth	12	twelve twelfth
3	three third	88	eighty eight eighty eighth
27	twenty seven twenty seventh	28	twenty eight twenty eighth

(See answer key)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 3 again, and fill in the blanks with the words that you hear.

Ho ho no!

Aftenposten, a _____ Norwegian newspaper, has apologized after _____ publishing a _____ that stated Santa Claus had died at 226 years old on December 3rd. The death was listed as just _____ of the _____ man's 227th birthday—stating that he was born on December 12th, 1788. The _____ also announced details for Santa's funeral to _____ place at the North Pole _____ on December 28th.

_____ late last week, the _____ easily could have ruined the holiday season for children who celebrate Christmas.

The paper admits a _____ “internal _____” led to the _____ posting. It posted a brief apology to its website after removing the online _____ of the death notice.

While the paper _____ to find out how the _____-up happened, the Internet has already _____ in with a _____ of relief—and well- _____ Santa jokes.

(See answer key)

LANGUAGE FOCUS: CARDINAL, ORDINAL, AND NOMINAL NUMBERS

In speaking and writing, we use numbers for many purposes:

- to count people or things
- to put things in order
- to identify people or things

We have three number systems:

1. Cardinal: how many
2. Ordinal: position
3. Nominal: name

Cardinal Numbers

Cardinal Numbers: **one, two, three, four, five**, and so on.

A cardinal number answers the question “How many?”

We use cardinal numbers when we talk about:

- Money: Ten dollars; one dollar and twenty-five cents
- Placing orders: 4 glasses of water, and 3 bowls of soup
- Age: 12 years old; 90 years old
- Years: 2015; 2016; 1867 (even when giving a date)

Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal Numbers: **first (1st), second (2nd), third (3rd), fourth (4th), fifth (5th)**, and so on.

Ordinal numbers tell you the position of someone or something in a group or list.

We use ordinal numbers when we talk about:

- Dates (but not years): January 1st, February 14th, March 17th, November 11th.
- Position: He won the race: he was first. I am second in line.
- Rank: First Minister; Second Lieutenant;
- Travel class: Third-class train ticket; first-class plane ticket.
- Numbered streets and avenues (not house addresses): First Street; Two Hundred and Twelfth Street.

Nominal Numbers

A nominal number is a number used only as a name, or to identify something. They are said like cardinal numbers (never like ordinal numbers). It is important to say nominal numbers in the pattern used in the country where you live.

We use nominal numbers to talk about:

- Your telephone number
- Address street number (but not a street that has a number as its name)
- Postal code (letters and numbers)
- Social Insurance Number
- School or employment ID number
- License number (letters and numbers)
- Credit or debit card number
- Bus or train route number
- Sports jersey number



Jon Cornish, retired running back for the Calgary Stampeders, wore jersey number 9. (Photo source: http://i.cbc.ca/1.2436113.144908974!/fileImage/httpImage/image.jpg_gen/derivatives/original_620/jon-cornish.jpg)

In Canada, telephone numbers are said 1-403-123-4567.

You cannot say 14-03-12-34567, for example, or you will not be understood.

Social Insurance Numbers are said 123 456 789.

In cities on a grid like Calgary, addresses are said so that the listener knows which street and avenue you live near.

For example, if you live at 1204 11th Avenue, you would say “twelve zero four eleventh Avenue”, so the listener knows you live near 12th Street.

Postal codes are said T two R one W three.

The type of credit card determines the pattern in which the numbers are pronounced.

The following table shows how cardinal and ordinal numbers are said, and includes abbreviations for writing ordinal numbers.

English Number	Cardinal	Ordinal	Ordinal Abbreviations
1	one	first	1st
2	two	second	2nd
3	three	third	3rd
4	four	fourth	4th
5	five	fifth	5th
6	six	sixth	6th
7	seven	seventh	7th
8	eight	eighth	8th
9	nine	ninth	9th
10	ten	tenth	10th
11	eleven	eleventh	11th
12	twelve	twelfth	12th
13	thirteen	thirteenth	13th
14	fourteen	fourteenth	14th
15	fifteen	fifteenth	15th
16	sixteen	sixteenth	16th
17	seventeen	seventeenth	17th
18	eighteen	eighteenth	18th
19	nineteen	nineteenth	19th
20	twenty	twentieth	20th
22	twenty-two	twenty-second	22nd
25	twenty-five	twenty-fifth	25th
30	thirty	thirtieth	30th
40	forty	fortieth	40th
50	fifty	fiftieth	50th
60	sixty	sixtieth	60th
70	seventy	seventieth	70th
80	eighty	eightieth	80th
90	ninety	ninetieth	90th
100	one hundred	one hundredth	100th

Adapted from: <http://www.really-learn-english.com/cardinal-and-ordinal-numbers.html>

LANGUAGE FOCUS ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 1 again, and identify the following numbers as ordinal, **O**, or cardinal, **C**:

NUMBER	O or C	NUMBER	O or C
60		25	
4		13	
1.25		100,000,000	
1			

(See answer key)

Based on the numbers you have heard in Newscast 1, what can you add to the list of what we use cardinal numbers for? _____

LANGUAGE FOCUS ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 3 again, and identify the following numbers as ordinal, **O**, or cardinal, **C**:

NUMBER	O or C	NUMBER	O or C
26		12	
3		88	
27		28	

(See answer key)

CBC CALGARY TRANSCRIPTS OF WEEKLY NEWSCASTS

	WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi. This is Natasha Frakes. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of December 14 th .	0:00
Newscast 1 <i>Dollarama retail chain says majority of items now sold for \$1.25 and up</i>	<p>Montreal-based Dollarama says almost 60 per cent of everything they sold in the last 4 months was priced at \$1.25 and up.</p> <p>Dollarama, which originally sold virtually everything for \$1, has had to slowly increase prices because of the lower value of the loonie.</p> <p>Even though Dollarama rakes in sales in Canadian dollars, it pays most of its expenses in U.S. dollars when it imports goods.</p> <p>Even with the 25 cent increase in prices, the discount chain said its sales rose 13 per cent last quarter for a profit of just over \$100 million. But the chain said the weak Canadian dollar still makes it tough to do business on razor-thin margins.</p>	0:09
Newscast 2 <i>Suicide rate in Alberta up 30% in wake of mass oilpatch layoffs</i>	<p>The suicide rate in Alberta has increased by 30 percent in the first half of this year as job losses mount across the province.</p> <p>Calgary Distress Centre counsellor David Kirby says demand for counselling services has increased by 80 per cent—and the problems people are struggling with are more complex. He said, “People are just at wits’ end.”</p> <p>Mara Grunau, who heads the Centre for Suicide Prevention, says the increase in Alberta’s suicide rate is staggering adding, “It...far exceeds anything we would have ever expected, and we would never have expected to see this much this soon.”</p> <p>However, Grunau is optimistic the trend can be curbed now that the province has increased its budget for mental health. “In the budget we saw money specifically earmarked for mental health and we’re hoping that some of it will be directly put into suicide prevention,” Grunau said.</p> <p>The Canadian Mental Health Association says it is too early to link the suicides with the economy.</p>	1:01

	WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Newscast 3 <i>Norwegian newspaper accidentally publishing a notice that stated Santa Claus was dead</i>	<p>Ho ho no!</p> <p>Aftenposten, a prominent Norwegian newspaper, has apologized after accidentally publishing a notice that stated Santa Claus had died at 226 years old on December 3rd. The death was listed as just shy of the jolly man's 227th birthday—stating that he was born on December 12th, 1788. The notice also announced details for Santa's funeral to take place at the North Pole chapel on Dec. 28.</p> <p>Published late last week, the hoax easily could have ruined the holiday season for children who celebrate Christmas.</p> <p>The paper admits a botched “internal procedure” led to the fake posting. It posted a brief apology to its website after removing the online version of the death notice.</p> <p>While the paper vows to find out how the slip-up happened, the Internet has already weighed in with a sigh of relief—and well-timed Santa jokes.</p>	2:14

ANSWER KEY FOR NEWSCAST 1: DOLLARAMA RETAIL CHAIN SAYS MAJORITY OF ITEMS NOW SOLD FOR \$1.25 AND UP

LISTENING ACTIVITY 5

Instructions: Listen for the numbers in Newscast 1 again. What does each number represent?

NUMBER	REPRESENTS
60	percent (of everything sold)
4	months
1.25	price
1	dollar (original price of everything)
25	percent (increase in prices)
13	percent (rise in prices last quarter)
100,000,000	dollars (profit)

ANSWER KEY FOR NEWSCAST 2: SUICIDE RATE IN ALBERTA UP 30% IN WAKE OF MASS OILPATCH LAYOFFS

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 4

Instructions: Without looking at the table above again, try to write the terms that you remember with the matching definitions below:

WORD	DEFINITION
rate	a measure, quantity, or frequency
link	a relationship where one thing affects the other
specifically	to have a special or definite purpose
staggering	astonishing or deeply shocking
trend	change or develop in a way
expected	something that one thinks will be or happen
complex	difficult to find an answer to
counsellor	a person trained to give guidance on personal, or psychological problems
distress	a lot of anxiety, sorrow, or pain
curbed	to control or limit something that is not wanted
struggling	have difficulty handling or coping
exceeds	be greater in number or size than
earmarked	choose for a purpose
optimistic	hopeful and confident about the future
mount	to increase, rise, or get bigger

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 2 for overall comprehension. Use the following questions to help you:

1. What has increased in Alberta? Suicide rate
2. How much has the suicide rate increased? 30%
3. How much has demand for counselling services increased? 80%

4. Did Mara Grunau expect the increase in Alberta's suicide rate? No
5. What is Mara Grunau hoping? some budget money will go directly to suicide prevention
6. Does the Canadian Mental Health Association say there is enough information to link the suicide rate to the economy? No

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 2 again and fill in the blanks with the words that you hear.

The suicide rate in Alberta has increased by 30 percent in the first half of this year as job losses mount across the province.

Calgary Distress Centre counsellor David Kirby says demand for counselling services has increased by 80 per cent—and the problems people are struggling with are more complex. He said, “People are just at wits’ end”.

Mara Grunau, who heads the Centre for Suicide Prevention, says the increase in Alberta’s suicide rate is staggering adding, “It...far exceeds anything we would have ever expected, and we would never have expected to see this much this soon.”

However, Grunau is optimistic the trend can be curbed now that the province has increased its budget for mental health. “In the budget we saw money specifically earmarked for mental health and we’re hoping that some of it will be directly put into suicide prevention,” Grunau said.

The Canadian Mental Health Association says it is too early to link the suicides with the economy.

ANSWER KEY FOR NEWSCAST 3: NORWEGIAN NEWSPAPER ACCIDENTALLY PUBLISHING A NOTICE THAT STATED SANTA CLAUS WAS DEAD

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Look at the words from the table above. Put the number in the box below next to the words with the opposite meaning. You will have to use two numbers in the same box once.

1. prominent	2. accidentally	3. publishing	4. notice	5. jolly
6. hoax	7. botched	8. internal	9. fake	10. vows

NUMBER	ANTONYM/OPPOSITE
6 and 9	real/genuine
10	break a promise/refuse
8	external/outside
3	keep secret/cover up
7	corrected/succeeded
4	secret/concealment
5	sad/miserable/gloomy
1	obscure/little-known/minor
2	on purpose

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 4

Instructions: Complete the following sentences with the best idiom from the table above

1. When he weighed in with his advice, rather than being inconvenient, it was well-timed.
2. Their project was not a success due to a slip-up.
3. The event has not been postponed. It will take place as scheduled.
4. When they realized there was a solution, they breathed a sigh of relief.
5. The car did not break down far away from their destination. They were just shy of their journey's end.

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to the Newscast again for the following numbers and underline how they are said:

26	<u>twenty six</u> twenty sixth	12	twelve <u>twelfth</u>
3	three <u>third</u>	88	<u>eighty eight</u> eighty eighth
27	twenty seven <u>twenty seventh</u>	28	twenty eight <u>twenty eighth</u>

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 3 again and fill in the blanks with the words that you hear.

Ho ho no!

Aftenposten, a prominent Norwegian newspaper, has apologized after accidentally publishing a notice that stated Santa Claus had died at 226 years old on December 3rd. The death was listed as just shy of the jolly man's 227th birthday—stating that he was born on December 12th, 1788. The notice also announced details for Santa's funeral to take place at the North Pole chapel on December 28th.

Published late last week, the hoax easily could have ruined the holiday season for the children who celebrate Christmas.

The paper admits a botched “internal procedure” led to the fake posting. It posted a brief apology to its website after removing the online version of the death notice.

While the paper vows to find out how the slip-up happened, the Internet has already weighed in with a sigh of relief—and well-timed Santa jokes.

ANSWER KEY FOR LANGUAGE FOCUS

LANGUAGE FOCUS ACTIVITY 1

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 1 again, and identify the following numbers as ordinal, O, or cardinal, C:

NUMBER	O or C	NUMBER	O or C
60	C	25	C
4	C	13	C
1.25	C	100,000,000	C
1	C		

Based on the numbers you have heard in Newscast 1, what can you add to the list of what we use cardinal numbers for? percentages

LANGUAGE FOCUS ACTIVITY 2

Instructions: Listen to Newscast 3 again, and identify the following numbers as ordinal, O, or cardinal, C:

NUMBER	O or C	NUMBER	O or C
26	C	88	C
3	O	28	O
27	O	14	C
12	O	526	C